

REFUGEES ARE WELCOME HERE
PROTEST SATURDAY 19 MARCH

London ★ Glasgow ★ Cardiff ★ Called by Stand Up to Racism www.standuptoracism.org.uk >>Pages 4&5



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NEW **GOOGLE** SCANDAL COMPANY HANDS CHIEF MORE IN **1 DAY** THAN IT PAID IN TAX IN **9 YEARS**

TAX SCAM BOSSES' BONANZA

by ALISTAIR FARROW

THERE'S NO austerity for them. Just days after Google did a sweetheart tax deal with the Tories, the firm has handed vastly more money to its top bosses.

Chief executive Sundar Pichai (pictured right) received £138 million worth of stock in the company—over £38 million more than the company agreed to pay in corporation tax to cover nine years.

But Pichai's personal haul is insignificant compared to that of Eric Schmidt, Google's executive chair. He owns shares worth £2.2 billion in the company, and is due to get more

£138,000,000

WORTH OF SHARES HANDED TO
CEO **SUNDAR PICHAI**

£26,000,000

WORTH OF SHARES SET FOR
FINANCE BOSS **RUTH PORAT**

£97,000,000

IS ALL **GEORGE OSBORNE**
GOT IN TAXES—FOR 9 YEARS

later this year.

Google is far from finished with its hand-outs. Chief financial officer Ruth Porat (pictured left) is in line for over £27 million.

The scale of the bosses' bonanza underlines the scandal that chancellor George Osborne agreed Google should pay

**>>continued on
Page 3**

HEALTH SERVICE

Junior doctors go into battle for our NHS

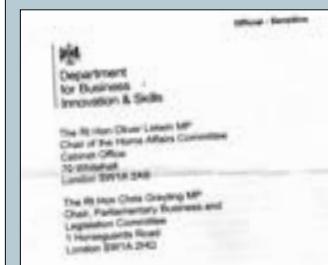
A 24-HOUR strike was set to begin in NHS England this Wednesday as doctors fight Tory plans for dangerous new contracts.

The contracts would make it easier for bosses to make junior doctors work a dangerous number of hours.

Doctors protested against the plan last Saturday.

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TRADE UNION BILL



Leaked letter shows Tory panic over bill

A RESTRICTED document leaked to Socialist Worker shows the Tories are in disarray over their anti-union Trade Union Bill.

It says the Tories may have to make concessions to avoid defeat in the House of Lords. The TUC has begun a week of action against the bill.

>>Pages 2&3

AMERICA

Water crisis in Flint—how a US city was poisoned

FOR NEARLY two years people in Flint, Michigan, have been drinking and bathing in water classified as "toxic waste".

Those responsible have refused to be questioned about the crisis.

But resistance is growing.

>>Pages 10&11



THE THINGS THEY SAY

'You will not find the Guardian or Observer writing about "bogus asylum seekers"'

The Guardian newspaper style guide 2009

'They will only welcome genuine refugees if bogus asylum seekers are speedily removed'

Nick Cohen in the Observer newspaper 2016

'We don't get the Socialist Worker in the office but perhaps we should because it has a very good story today'

The Guardian newspaper notices some news

'We didn't value England, and were not on the side of the English'

Labour MP Tristram Hunt on how voters saw Labour at the last election

'I can no longer guarantee the safety or privacy of the men'

Pro-rape Daryush Valizadeh on why he cancelled meetings in Britain after the threat of protests



Exclusive: Leaked letter shows Tory union bill fear

A RESTRICTED government document leaked to Socialist Worker shows that the Tories expect the House of Lords to defeat "flagship" parts of the Trade Union Bill.

Socialist Worker has a letter, marked "Official—sensitive", from Nick Boles, minister of state for skills, to Oliver Letwin and Chris Grayling.

Letwin is chair of the home affairs committee and Grayling is chair of the parliamentary business committee. The letter is copied to David Cameron.

It "seeks clearance on essential government amendments to be made at Lords committee and possible concessions to the Trade Union Bill designed to ease handling in the House of Lords".

Boles says that Labour

and Lib Dem peers will put amendments to the bill and that the government may lose.

Therefore the aim is to "make changes to the bill, without significantly defeating its primary purpose".

Boles hopes that "a willingness to give some ground on certain aspects of the bill may lead to a less hard line response to the bill on other issues".

Unions should demand that Labour and other parties accept no deals and oppose it in full. The whole bill can be defeated.

And the only way to guarantee that is hard-hitting action now and a readiness to defy the law in the future.

The Socialist Worker story was widely shared—including by the TUC.

Longer article online bit.ly/20FONs7



● ABOUT 800,000 people will be hit by tax credit cuts from April. George Osborne was forced into a climbdown over tax credits in his autumn statement following a defeat for the proposed measures in the House of Lords. But the Treasury is proceeding with a cut to the "income-rise disregard", which could cost affected households £200 to £300 a year on average.

Baron Osborne

● Apparently former Labour MP Simon Danczuk is being investigated by Parliament's expenses watchdog. He claimed for four children staying with him in London when he barely sees two of them. Danczuk said, "I welcome the chance to get this matter cleared up." So do we.

Nice ex-minister jobs if you can get them

ESTHER McVEY, the former TV presenter and employment minister, had the bad luck to be one of the few Tory MPs to lose a seat to Labour last year. Fortunately, she is not languishing with nothing to do. She has landed five jobs.

She chairs the British Transport Police Authority, a post requiring 60 days' work a year for a salary of £32,000.

She advises the Floreat Group, a private investment organisation. She also advises Hume Brophy, a communications firm. She lectures at Liverpool University. She is a fellow of Hull University. This week, she has been

mildly ticked off by the Business Appointments Committee because she did not ask its advice before taking the transport policing job, which as an ex-minister she is supposed to do.

But it says that, had she asked, it would have told her it was OK.

Esther Mcvey is doing OK

Tory wants to play dirty in Portsmouth

A TORY councillor's plan to "play dirty" against those who had criticised the way the local authority was run has been exposed.

His intended victims were accidentally copied in to his email chain.

Portsmouth councillor Scott Harris singled out a campaigner against domestic violence and another who had asked questions about the Portsmouth leg of the Americas Cup. He wrote, "The elections are

coming... Quite frankly it might be a good idea to play dirty this time."

He went on to say that he was "compiling some stuff" on Shonagh Dillon who runs Aurora New Dawn, a local charity that supports victims of domestic violence.

"I've found some stuff on Jon Woods and the SWP locally which

Scott Harris:

Just another £400,000 is easy to miss

TORY MP Geoffrey Cox received 11 payments totalling about £400,000 for his work as a barrister, which he failed to declare on the Register of Members' Interest.

He was a member of the Standards Committee at the time.

He was so engrossed in setting up chambers in Mauritius and Dubai that he did not get around to counting his money until the end of September when, "to my dismay, I became fully aware of the scale of my oversight".

Who among us has not been in a similar predicament?



22

number of mergers or takeovers on private mental health firms last year in Britain

23%

drop in number of NHS mental health beds since 2010

Tory MP's background? Just Google it

WHEN MPS were debating tax avoidance, with particular reference to Google, no one was more understanding than the Tory MP Nigel Huddleston.

He told his colleagues, "We must remember that Google was founded only in 1998, which makes it a teenager, and many other major internet companies are also teenagers."

"Teenagers make mistakes: they need guiding. It is up to us, in the role of a responsible parent, to make sure that we reset the ground rules on behaviour."

Huddleston was employed by Google until last May.

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Circulation 020 7840 5601



Write to Socialist Worker
PO Box 71327
London SE11 9BW

More on Flint—pages 10&11



Protesters to take on the racists on 19 March

Anti-fascists met in London last week for the Unite Against Fascism conference, reports **Sadie Robinson**

CAMPAIGNERS SPOKE of a “new hope” for pushing back racism at Unite Against Fascism’s annual conference last Saturday.

The conference took place as governments across Europe target refugees and Muslims.

But activists were clear that not everyone has fallen for the racist rhetoric of politicians.

Anti-racist campaigner Amal Azzudin said support for refugees in Calais had been “breathhtaking”.

“A third of the UK did something to help refugees,” she said. “That gives us hope.”

Amal stressed the need to build anti-racist protests on Saturday 19 March.

Demonstrations will take place in London, Glasgow and Cardiff, as well as in cities across Europe.

Action

Petros Constantinou is from Keerfa, a coalition against racism and fascism in Greece.

He appealed for “joint action” across Europe on 19 March.

Petros said the drowning of refugees in the Aegean Sea was a “crime”.

He said, “All these refugees are welcome.”

“If we cancel the debt and stop paying the bankers we have enough

BACK STORY

Anti-racists are preparing for the Stand up to Racism demonstrations on 19 March

●Protests will take place in London, Glasgow and Cardiff as part of a day of action

●Anti-Nazis from Unite Against Fascism are planning to join the protests

●It comes as racists from anti-Islam group Pegida visited Birmingham on Saturday. And the National Front marched in Dover the week before



PROTESTING AGAINST Pegida in Birmingham

PICTURE: GEOFF DEXTER

back into the water?”

Weyman Bennett from Unite Against Fascism stressed that anti-fascists have had some victories.

She said, “They came from parts of the world where directly or indirectly Western military intervention had turned them into refugees.”

But he said that a recent fascist protest in Dover, Kent, showed that “we can’t rest on our laurels”.

Trade unionists, students, councillors and representatives from refugee charities also spoke.

Clare from Waltham Forest in east London stressed the need for different tactics in taking on the racist Ukip party and fighting fascists.

Gerry Gable, editor of Searchlight magazine, said it was important to label fascists as fascist.

He added, “We should never ditch the united front strategy.

“It has been successful in holding back the fascists.”

Weaker

Phil Turner from Rotherham, South Yorkshire, said the fascists are weaker in Britain than elsewhere in Europe.

He said this was “because of the united front approach”.

Roger Keeley from Huddersfield spoke about a recent anti-racist

mobilisation against Britain First in Dewsbury.

“For the first time in my memory we outnumbered them,” he said.

“I feel like a corner has been turned. People are elated.”

The protests on 19 March are crucial. Big demonstrations will show the scale of opposition to the government’s racism.

And they will show Muslims and refugees that they are not alone.

More online

For more on the 19 March protests go to standuptoracism.org.uk

Fighting anti-Muslim racism

WORKSHOPS AT the Unite Against Fascism conference looked at the government’s Prevent strategy.

Shelly Asquith from the National Union of Students denounced Prevent for “criminalising” Muslims.

Aman Ali from Muslim charity Mend said Prevent was “causing utter fear”.

He said, “A few



Muslim women protest

years ago I felt despondent. But there’s more hope now.”

Muslims at the conference said unity against racism made them feel stronger.

Amina told Socialist Worker, “A lot of Muslims are scared. But it’s really heartening to see the support we are getting from different organisations.”

Syrian refugees stuck at Turkish and EU borders

TENS OF thousands of people are fleeing Syria’s second city Aleppo to gather at refugee camps around the Oncupinar gate on the border with Turkey.

Turkish authorities said 35,000 people arrived in just 48 hours last week, with more coming every day. Eyewitnesses in the city say more people are planning to leave.

Opposition stronghold Eastern Aleppo is under siege and there is heavy bombardment from the Syrian dictatorship and its ally Russia (see page 6).

Its fall could be the catalyst for many more people to lose hope.

Border

Officially Turkey has an open border policy with Syria. Yet it has kept the crossing closed to almost all the refugees.

European Union (EU) leaders called on Turkey to open the crossing at a summit in Amsterdam last Saturday.

Yet the EU also sent guards to Greece’s northern border to stop refugees trying to head further

on into Europe.

EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini insisted that aid promised to Turkey in December was precisely to help it welcome Syrians. But the aid was part of a deal to make sure Syrians stopped getting from Turkey into Europe, triggering a crackdown on refugees.

Refugees

The German and French governments convinced Greece last Friday to recognise Turkey as a “safe third country”. This means refugees passing through Turkey can be deported back there.

EU leaders are blackmailing Greece into blocking refugees or being cut off.

There was outrage across Australia over the past week, including marches thousands-strong, against its brutal immigration system. Refugees are trapped in offshore prison camps in a system many European politicians would like to copy.

Racist Pegida outgunned in Birmingham

A SMALL and bedraggled group of supporters of the anti-Muslim group Pegida gathered at the remote Birmingham International railway station last Saturday.

They were outnumbered by counter-demonstrators.

At most there were 200 at the Pegida rally, although the police tweeted, “Around 150 Pegida protesters mustered”.

Most of the turnout were veterans of the English Defence League and other fascist outfits.

Around 100 counter demonstrators from Unite Against Fascism and the West Midlands Anti Fascist Network gathered at the station.

Pegida was protected by hundreds of police with dogs.

Meanwhile over 150 people came to a broadly-based anti-Pegida protest in the centre of Birmingham.

Tommy Robinson, former head of the EDL, was the main speaker at the Pegida rally.

He told reporters he had selected an empty industrial estate as the venue.

He said, “It’s sad that we have to come into the middle of nowhere to make sure we can show ourselves for what we are, to make sure that bottles and bricks are not raining in on top of us.”

The brutal acts of Pegida groups elsewhere in Europe show the importance of keeping such groups small and on the defensive.

Socialist Worker WHAT WE THINK

WE CAN TURN THE TIDE ON MIGRANT SCAPEGOATING

MUCH OF the media eagerly publicised the news that professor Angus Dalglish was due to make a speech attacking migrants.

He was to claim that migrants are putting the health service under intolerable pressure and could cause it to collapse.

An instant warning note is that Dalglish was due to speak at a conference alongside a band of right wing politicians.

Speakers included former Tory ministers Liam Fox, David Davis and John Redwood, Ukip leader Nigel Farage, the DUP’s Ian Paisley Jr—and Labour’s Graham Stringer MP.

And, although neither the Mail nor Express newspapers mentioned it, Dalglish was a Ukip candidate at the last general election.

Far from being a threat to the health service, migrants are essential to its survival. Some 11 percent of NHS staff are not British. The proportion increases for professionally qualified clinical staff (14 percent) and even more so for doctors (26 percent).

Dalglish’s tirade was seized upon because there is now a

daily effort to blame migrants for problems in society. From lack of school places, to low pay, to lack of decent and affordable housing, to cuts in the NHS.

It is a systematic strategy to divert attention from the real culprits in society, the rich and the powerful. Cameron’s description of refugees in Calais as a “bunch of migrants” came after Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn questioned him about Google’s tax avoidance.

Cameron wants to stop us uniting against him.

But tens of thousands of ordinary people will not go along with Cameron’s attacks.

They refuse to ignore the horror of mass drownings and the

“**The refugee crisis is the great question that faces everyone today**”

BERNIE AND BEYONCÉ

ONE OF the biggest sporting events in the world was dominated by a musical tribute to an armed revolutionary group last week.

The revolutionary Black Panther Party led an inspiring fight against racism, imperialism and capitalism.

And more than 100 million people saw superstar Beyoncé perform her new single Formation in costumes based on their uniform at the US Superbowl.

Afterwards some of her

backing dancers posed with signs demanding justice for Mario Woods, a black man shot dead by US police.

Formation was released the day after what would have been the 21st birthday of Trayvon Martin, a black teen whose white killer was cleared of murder.

Its video draws attention to police killings. A “boycott” by cops only looks set to make it an even bigger hit.

One lesson to draw from this is that capitalism tries to commodify

suffering of refugees in Calais.

This issue is the great question that faces everyone today.

Thousands of people are prepared to risk their lives to flee poverty, war and climate change.

Either the walls will grow taller and the death lists longer, or there will be a political victory for those who say open the borders.

On Saturday 19 March there are demonstrations in London, Glasgow and Cardiff called by Stand Up to Racism.

Thousands will take part to say refugees are welcome here, and to oppose racism, Islamophobia and Antisemitism.

A major turnout will make the continuing struggle against state racism, the Prevent agenda and the mobilisations of the far right easier.

There are five weeks left to ensure that as many people as possible take to the streets.

Everyone has a part to play. You can raise the issue at work or college, or bring your union banner. Help organise transport, raise money to make sure refugees can come, and spread the message on social media.

We need to go all out for 19 March.



Standing up to racism at the UAF conference

PICTURE: SOCIALIST WORKER

FIGURE IT OUT

816

Islamophobic hate crimes recorded in London in the year ending July 2015

70%

Increase from the previous year

60%

of Islamophobia victims are women, according to the Tell Mama project, which monitors Islamophobic incidents

ANALYSIS

ALEX CALLINICOS



Russia's proxy war twists knife in Syria

AT A meeting in Manchester last week I heard a Syrian refugee describe his plight and that of his family. It was heartbreaking. Essentially the same story could be told of millions, and their number increases daily.

The forces of Syrian dictator Bashar al-Assad are currently mounting an offensive against the country's largest city, Aleppo. Tens of thousands of civilians are fleeing Aleppo province towards the border with Turkey, which is denying them entry. The carnage helped to put pay to peace talks briefly held in Geneva last week.

According to Foreign Policy magazine, "Russian airpower allowed Assad and his allied paramilitary forces to finally cut off the narrow, rebel-held 'Azaz corridor' that links the Turkish border to the city of Aleppo.

"The city's full encirclement is now a distinct possibility, with regime troops and Shiite fighters moving from the south, the west, and the north. Should the rebel-held parts of the city ultimately fall, it will be a dramatic victory for Assad and the greatest setback to the rebellion since the start of the uprising in 2011."

Russian president Vladimir Putin doesn't support Assad unconditionally. The Financial Times newspaper reported recently that late last year Putin sent his head of military intelligence Igor Sergun to meet Assad. He told him he would have to stand down as part of an eventual peace settlement.

In a twist worthy of a John le Carre novel, Sergun's death was announced at the beginning of January. Whatever the truth about this, Assad rejected his proposed removal. According to the Financial Times, "In his dealings with the Kremlin, Mr Assad has adopted a strategy of playing one foreign power off against another. His trump card on this occasion was Iran. Russia has been nervous of Tehran's growing regional influence at the cost of its own leverage for months."

Since then it seems that Putin has decided to make a virtue of necessity and use Russian airpower to tilt the balance in Assad's favour.

The alliance between Russia and Syria dates back to the 1940s, and gives Russia access to increasingly important Middle East bases. Putin clearly wants to hang onto it.

Power

Nevertheless, Sergun's visit to Damascus underlines that, as Dmitri Trenin of the Carnegie Moscow Centre says, "for Putin, the intervention in Syria was never about keeping Assad in power, it is about getting the Americans to acknowledge Russia's key role in settling this conflict."

In other words, the Syrian people's tragedy is that their country has become a battleground for a proxy war. This war is not simply between regional powers such as Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey. It's also between the United States and Russia, still the two great nuclear powers.

And Washington is playing the same game, not just in the Middle East. Last week the New York Times newspaper reported, "President Obama plans to substantially increase the deployment of heavy weapons, armoured vehicles and other equipment to Nato countries in Central and Eastern Europe, a move that administration officials said was aimed at deterring Russia from further aggression in the region."

The administration proposes to more than quadruple its military budget for Europe to £2.4 billion. The deployment to countries such as Hungary, Romania, and the Baltic states would allow Nato to maintain a full armoured combat brigade in the area. This could breach a 1997 agreement between Nato and Russia not to maintain large troop numbers near each other's borders.

Russia, hit hard economically by Western sanctions and oil price collapse, is too weak to mount the global challenge to the US it offered during the Cold War. But the pacification of Europe that took place during the 1990s seems to be going into reverse.

Meanwhile, the hot war is escalating in Syria. Foreign Policy predicts that the Assad offensive will strengthen both Isis and the Kurdish forces that already control significant areas along the Syrian-Turkish border. Further Kurdish successes might well provoke military intervention by Turkey.

Syria's agony is far from over.

Is Corbyn supporters group cutting off its grassroots?

Momentum's ever tighter focus on the Labour Party is a retreat that limits its potential to mobilise, warns Nick Clark

MOMENTUM, THE group founded to build on the success of Jeremy Corbyn's Labour leadership campaign, has decided formally to restrict its membership.

The group's National Committee agreed last Saturday that membership of Momentum should be restricted to Labour Party members and affiliated supporters.

Non-Labour members will still be allowed to join provided they are "supporters of the aims and values of the Labour Party."

But people who are members of other political parties will not be allowed to join Momentum.

Momentum was set up in the wake of Jeremy Corbyn's successful campaign to be elected leader of the Labour Party.

Groundswell

Its aim was to build on that groundswell of support by building a "mass movement for social change."

It wanted to organise "supporters amongst the Labour Party membership as well as the wider social movement which is springing up".

Momentum's aim was also to pull people into the Labour Party. And there were



SUPPORTERS OF Jeremy Corbyn (left) awaiting Labour leadership vote results last year (above) PICTURE: WEEKLY BULL

debates about whether the focus should be on building outward looking campaigns or looking towards internal Labour Party battles.

Momentum's national committee rightly agreed to support the CND demonstration

against Trident nuclear missiles in London on Saturday 27 February.

And it also committed to build for the People's Assembly national demo in London on 16 April.

But the committee's agenda emphasised a focus on building the Labour Party. It said Momentum's stated aim is to "strengthen the Labour Party by increasing participation and engagement at local, regional and national levels."

"Furthermore, Momentum is committed to supporting the Labour Party winning elections and entering

government."

Such a strategy risks allowing the groundswell of support that grew around Corbyn's campaign to melt away.

Corbyn's strength came from the hundreds of thousands of people who voted for him because they wanted an alternative to austerity, racism and war.

Sustaining that will mean building a broad-based movement.



Got a story?

Email ideas to reports@socialistworker.co.uk

Labour benefit gig puts emphasis on elections

THE OPENING gig in the JC4PM tour in Kentish Town, north London, last week showed that it is still possible to mobilise large numbers of Jeremy Corbyn supporters.

Well over 400 people turned out to hear musicians, comedians and activists.

Jo told Socialist Worker, "I'm still very enthused by Corbyn's victory. I came here to be with like-minded people."

She added that defending Corbyn against the right in Labour "can't be left to him alone".

But the audience was smaller than at Corbyn's election rallies last summer—and the average

age seemed older. Labour activist Namaa said, "I came tonight to see how many people would be here. It's smaller than I hoped it would be—and there aren't enough young people. It's starting to look like just the old activists."

Former London mayor Ken Livingstone told the audience the most important task was to "elect a Labour government".

He added, "Get involved in your local Labour Party. Get involved in Momentum."

And tour organiser Jeremy Hardy said it was important to campaign for a "Labour-led coalition in 2020".

Jeremy Hardy

FIGURE IT OUT

251,417

people voted for Jeremy Corbyn as Labour Party leader last year

88,449

of these were registered supporters who were not members of Labour

388,407

people are currently members of the Labour Party

Solidarity boosts fight to reinstate victimised rep

by SADIE ROBINSON

TEACHERS AT Birmingham's Small Heath School began a three-day strike on Tuesday of this week in an increasingly bitter dispute with school bosses.

NUT union members are striking in defence of victimised union rep Simon O'Hara.

They plan two further three-day strikes in the two weeks after next week's half term.

A big turnout from supporters boosted picket lines while a stream of vehicles tooted their horns in solidarity.

One striker told Socialist Worker, "The NUT is going strong and our members are out in full force today. Nobody is wavering—Simon's got a lot of support."

One teacher joined the NUT the day before the strike so they could join the action. Another filled out their NUT membership form on the picket line.

As one teacher told Socialist Worker, "The NUT has grown during this dispute—strikers are completely united and strong."

A series of escalating strikes forced bosses to back down at the end of last month over plans to turn the school into an academy. They also retreated on plans to push through 71 job cuts.

Two members of the interim executive board, which runs the school, also resigned.

But bosses then suspended another NUT member. One striker said this had "strengthened the resolve of the NUT".

Resigned

Simon has won support from parents, students, local campaigners and the trade union movement. Parents have joined picket lines several times to show their support.

Parent Shabina said she knew teachers were fighting to protect education "for my children".

Teachers handed in a petition against Simon's suspension signed by workers in the school to the local education authority last week.

But one striker said, "It's clear the school is backed by the authority. And the school's position seems to be, 'You can strike as much as you want'."

"Management is not trying to resolve this dispute."

Workers' action has caused a crisis for bosses—but more pressure needs to be piled onto them.

As one teacher told Socialist Worker, "If teachers and other workers are going to oppose cuts, we need to have strong union branches. Our management is trying to undermine that."

"The national union and the broader trade union movement



STRIKERS CALL out for solidarity on the picket line on Tuesday of this week

PICTURE: BRIDGET PARSONS

must look at what more can be done to support this dispute.

"This is now a test for the union movement."

Small Heath was one of the schools targeted by the "Trojan Horse" hoax letter, which claimed Muslims were trying to take over schools.

Several other schools that were cited have since been turned into academies. Bosses clearly hope to break the unions at Small Heath and privatise it too.

NASUWT and ATL union members at Small Heath have struck previously.

Unfortunately they are not on strike this week and bosses told their members to cover strikers' work.

If bosses get away with their attacks then all workers and students will be worse off.

Workers have shown they can push the bosses back. All union members at the school should stick together and unite to beat them.

Keep out the fracking firms

PROTESTERS rallied outside Blackpool Football Club in Lancashire on Tuesday at the beginning of a five week inquiry that could determine the future of fracking in Britain.

Lancashire County Council rejected fracking firm Cuadrilla's application for drilling sites near the hamlets of Roseacre and Little Plumpton.

Cuadrilla is now trying to get the decision overturned.

More than 40 witnesses are to testify. Roseacre campaigner Barbara Richardson, one of the witnesses, told Socialist Worker, "Fracking would be devastating for the local community."

"There would be heavy goods vehicles going down the little country roads and we worry about safety and noise. Then there's air pollution—and

it only takes one accident for the water to be contaminated."

"Burning fossil fuels also means we will miss our climate change targets."

The only fracking operation in Britain to go live was Cuadrilla's site at Preese Hall in Lancashire.

It was stopped in 2011 after causing earthquakes—a setback the industry has yet to recover from.

Overcoming the opposition in Lancashire is essential for the Tories to get their "shale gas revolution" back on the road.

Barbara said, "We've a strong case for the rejection to be upheld."

"But we're very concerned that the government's 'dash for gas' fracking policy is going to override local decision-making."

Dave Sewell

IN BRIEF

Ofsted slams top academy chain

ENGLAND'S BIGGEST academy chain is failing nearly half of its secondary school pupils, according to a damning report by schools watchdog Ofsted.

The Academies Enterprise Trust (AET) runs 67 academies in England.

Ofsted found that 40 percent of students in AET primary schools are in "academies that do not provide a good standard of education".

It added, "It is even worse in secondary, where 47 percent of pupils attend academies that are less than good."

Blacklisters pay out millions

SOME CONSTRUCTION workers who were blacklisted by major contractors have begun to receive compensation.

The Ucat union represents some of the 3,213 people on the industry blacklist found in the office of the Consulting Association seven years ago.

It says that 71 of its members



Dave Smith

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

have now received £5.6 million between them.

Dave Smith, secretary of the Blacklist Support Group said, "The blacklisting wretches have run up the white flag."

Ucat is still negotiating a further 89 cases. Hundreds of other blacklisted workers' cases are due in the High Court in May.

These are backed by the Unite and GMB unions and the Blacklist Support Group.

Tory bill could force tenants out

THE TORIES' Housing and Planning Bill could force as many as 60,000 families to move away from their areas, the Local Government Association (LGA) has warned.

The bill would force so-called "high income" tenants to pay market rents.

But the LGA said this week that this could affect around 215,000 households. They said those unable to pay may have to leave their areas completely.



On other pages...

Doctors fight Tories for the NHS
>>Page 20

Enormous strike over Syriza's cut hits Greece

The Syriza government in Greece is in a tight spot with no easy way out, reports Panos Garganas in Athens

THE HUGE general strike rally in Athens on Thursday of last week was probably the biggest since 2011.

The centre of Athens was so full of people that any attempt at separate rallies became meaningless.

The picture was the same all over Greece. The rally in the second city Thessalonica was huge and there were rallies in many small places.

In the morning it was like a Sunday. Everything was shut down, nothing worked.

The one exception was the media—its workers struck the previous day and reported on the strike day demonstration.

Other sectors outside the working class joined in. Striking lawyers had a huge contingent. Small shopkeepers shut for the day and marched. Farmers joined in.

Even the Syriza government made a statement supporting the strike.

It said it could strengthen its position in negotiating with Greece's "Troika" of creditors—the European Union, European Central Bank and International Monetary Fund.

It had little choice. Previously Syriza had tried to undermine the strike movement.

Government supporters tried to paint the lawyers' protests as a movement of the rich. They claimed the farmers' rallies had been led by the Nazi Golden Dawn party.

In reality many farmers voted Syriza. Golden Dawn has tried to infiltrate their protests, but on the march its supporters were confronted and had to leave.

Strength

Every attempt to dampen down the movement has failed. The mood on the march was of a show of strength. The main demand was to stop the bill reaching parliament.

Trade union bureaucrats have tried to delay, holding fire until a big demo on the day the pensions bill is voted through parliament.

But they thought that would have happened by now. Instead the

BACK STORY

A general strike in Greece last week was the biggest in years

- It was public and private sector unions' third general strike against pension cuts

- The Syriza government made a statement in support, hoping to strengthen its hand in negotiations with Greece's "Troika" of creditors

- It is in a bind because it cannot offer concessions to workers without confronting the Troika, and vice versa

government has kept delaying. It means they will have to call another general strike.

Sections of the movement are escalating—such as the ferry workers and possibly soon electricity workers. Those with most to lose from the bill are those with the best pensions. These are the fruit of decades of struggle, so those workers are often the best organised.

And no one dares divert the anger onto refugees in Greece. Everyone supports them.

As well as the anti-racist organisation Keerfa, groups of people marched independently with home-made pro-refugee banners.

The farmers are the most conservative section.

But when refugees walking to Greece's northern border encountered a farmers' blockade, farmers responded by inviting them to warm themselves around their fire.

All this puts the government in a tight spot with no easy way out.

It can't offer concessions without confronting the Troika—pension reform is central to their demands. But it can't push the reform through without confronting the movement.

And this is a very different movement to five or six years ago. Then people were getting their first taste of a general strike. Now they have experienced years of struggle—and shifted to the left.



WORKERS MARCH through Athens as part of a general strike

PICTURE: WORKERS SOLIDARITY

Radical left election bid in Ireland

by SIMON BASKETTER

A KEY electoral test for austerity is set for the end of the month in Ireland. Workers have been assaulted by the outgoing and the previous governments for the past eight years.

The coalition of the right wing Fine Gael party and its minority partner, the Irish Labour Party, took office in 2011.

It was just weeks after the previous government negotiated a bailout for the banks.

There are 272,000 fewer full-time jobs compared to before the financial crash—but there are 13 more billionaires.

The main bosses' party Fianna

Fail is making limited gains. Some of the anger against austerity will boost Sinn Féin.

Socialist Worker's sister organisation in Ireland is part of People Before Profit (PBP) which is standing in a joint slate with the Anti-Austerity Alliance.

Both groups have been prominent in the campaign against water charges.

According to PBP MP Richard Boyd Barrett, "You will see a further erosion of the dominance of Fianna Fail, Fine Gael and Labour." People Before Profit offers, "a genuine left wing radical alternative and leaving behind a past of cronyism, tribal politics and injustice," he said.

peoplebeforeprofit.ie



Richard Boyd Barrett

MIDDLE EAST SOLIDARITY DAYSCHOOL

Speakers include Omar Barghouti, Ala'a Shehaby, Sameh Naguib, Joseph Daher, Muzna al-Na'ib, Anne Alexander, Adam Hanieh and others

SATURDAY 12 MARCH

School of Oriental and African Studies, London, WC1H 0XG. See **Middle East Solidarity Dayschool 2016** on Facebook

Egypt's 'inhuman' regime

THE Egyptian regime has tortured an Italian student to death.

The body of student Giulio Regeni was found in a ditch outside the Egyptian capital Cairo, on 2 February.

That was nine days after he was reported missing on the anniversary of the 2011 Egyptian Revolution.

His body had

more than 30 broken bones, as well as burn marks.

Regeni was studying in Britain at the University of Cambridge.

Italian interior minister Angelino Alfano said Regeni had suffered "something inhuman, animal-like and unacceptable violence".

This highlights

the wider repression of thousands of activists, in particular those of the Muslim Brotherhood.

Many have been imprisoned and suffered torture at the hands of the state.

Egyptian activists defied the regime's authoritarian ban on protests by gathering at the Italian embassy in Cairo to show their respect for Regeni.

Solidarity with Syriza

DAVE SEWELL is wrong to criticise the record of Syriza in Greece (Socialist Worker, 6 February).

Greece had to sign a hard deal with its lenders to survive as a country. But Syriza is looking after the poorest and those in need in many ways.

High profile people pay their fines for tax evasion, lists of account holders in Swiss banks are scoured.

A write-off of the largest part of the national debt is a constant priority for Syriza and actively pursued.

You forgot to mention that despite huge economic issues, Greece is helping and saving hundreds of thousands of refugees.

With regards to Israel, Greece has common interests in the exploitation of hydrocarbons in the east Mediterranean.

For a country in need of economic resources this is a huge interest, and could not be ignored.

With regards to Palestine Syriza is promoting a peaceful solution to the conflict as practically there's not much else that it can do.

So Syriza has remained true to its values and keeps on fighting under extreme conditions.

Since you are criticising Syriza, can you please let us know of any achievements of Socialist Worker in Britain?

As far as I know you still have the Tories in power. You have not achieved anything at all for workers.

We will win in the end and better days will come to Greece. But we need support and not sneers.

Where has your solidarity gone?

Alex Galanos
On Facebook



ILLUSTRATION: TIM SANDERS

I was denied an education because I wear the niqab

I CAN'T help but vent about how I'm so fed up of Muslim and Islam bashing and the "debates" about the niqab.

I feel so frustrated when I think about the struggles that we who wear the niqab face for dressing the way we choose to dress.

There are so many common stereotypes and slanderous comments made about us.

The resentment I have over the issue is deep rooted for a number of reasons.

Too often we hear that the niqab is an obstruction to further education or careers. But as niqabi women we're often denied the right to education itself.

Back in 2006 I was granted admission to colleges in

Manchester based on my GCSE results. But the moment the colleges saw me in a veil I was refused an admission.

At one point I was specifically told that my niqab was problematic. I couldn't study what I wanted to because of this.

So don't tell me Muslims are intolerant people and that women in niqab don't integrate.

Actually we aren't even granted the opportunity to do so in the first place!

I wear the veil. I wanted an education but I was forcefully put into the situation by our education system to either study without the veil, or not study at all.

How is this any better than the people who stop girls from having

an education? I'm reminded of Malala Yousafzai, the Nobel peace prize winner, who was shot for going to school in Pakistan.

I'm also reminded of the good work building schools for girls by former Guantanamo Bay detainees Shaker Aamer and Moazzam Begg in Afghanistan.

The price they had to pay for that also comes to mind.

Don't tell me I'm oppressed because I wear a veil. I was oppressed when I was denied a right to education IN my veil.

It's intolerance that prevented a Muslim woman in a veil from the opportunity to integrate in society the way she wanted to.

Zulaikha Farooqi
Manchester

Leicester street busts racist migrant myths

NEGATIVE STORIES about refugees, migrants and new communities seem to be in the news every day.

Not so often do you see the real picture of cities such as Leicester.

Despite fierce cuts, poverty and unemployment Leicester has a success story. One that would make David Cameron choke on his champagne.

According to an LSE report Narborough Road in Leicester is officially the

"most diverse street in Britain".

And it is thriving. This street has people of more than 22 different nationalities who the report found to be helping each other and trading their skills. The report says, "We should not ignore the role migrants play in places like this, they don't just live here they invest and make them work."

Cath Lewis
Leicester

Love metal, hate racism

AS A nearly lifelong fan of metal music I was hurt and disappointed by the actions of former Pantera frontman Phil Anselmo.

At the end of a festival last month Anselmo gave Nazi salutes and shouted, "White Power".

What was more troubling was the initial reaction from many metal fans who made excuses for him.

There were many statements about the "PC police" and free speech.

Phil Anselmo shouted "White Power" and gave Nazi salutes

Anselmo is a talented musician. But that does not mean we should ignore his racism.

Metal is a kind of music that had a rebellious spirit and should be something

that the left can embrace and celebrate.

Those of us who are fans of metal must challenge racism in metal.

Geoff Breeze
Southampton

Just a thought...

Labour right are no threat

MOMENTUM founder Jon Lansman is wrong to think Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn will face a leadership challenge in May (Socialist Worker, 6 February).

The Labour right are a tiny minority at large and such a move would unleash a mega storm of protest.

Terry Crow
Hampshire

How do we fight fascism?

I READ your report from the protest against the National Front in Dover last week (Socialist Worker, 6 February).

But Hitler came to power by democratic means—the same as Cameron, elected with less than a quarter of the electoral vote.

Derrick Gaskin
Chelmsford

HITLER NEVER had a majority vote. He was elected, but he only got power because a divided left allowed his stormtroopers to take over the streets.

That's why we have to turn out and stop the Nazis today.

Julia Richardson
Swansea

Why must Rhodes fall?

I DISAGREE that the Cecil Rhodes statue at Oriel College in Oxford should be taken down.

Why not erect a large sign explaining who he was and what he did?

Tear it down and he'll be forgotten.

Mark Adams
On Facebook

RHODES' STATUE and Rhodes are part of our cultural heritage. And it is pretty important to know it and discuss it critically. Airbrushing figures out of history rarely ends well.

Andy Towle
On Facebook

EXPOSING the barbarism of Britain's imperialist history is the opposite of airbrushing. No definition of culture includes celebrating that. This is a monument to imperialism.

Do you think Zimbabweans fighting for independence allowed statues of Rhodes to stand? I'm with them.

Austin Challen
On Facebook



FIRST WORLD WAR

Slaughter of Verdun haunted France

THE FIRST World War's longest battle began 100 years ago this month in Verdun, northern France. By the time it ended in December more than 300,000 had died and many more were missing or wounded.

More than 23 million shells were fired. Nine villages were wiped off the map. Huge craters and toxic munitions still scar and poison the land today.

In both France and Germany, Verdun became known as “hell”.

Rain and shells tore up the clay-rich soil into a landscape of mud littered with human remains. Men could slip and drown in flooded craters.

Historian Richard Holmes writes, “Evidence of death was all too abundant; splintered trees turned to gibbets, heavy with dismembered limbs and glistening ropes of entrails.”

Verdun ushered in a new kind of war. February saw the first use of flame throwers in battle. Many soldiers never saw the enemy, with both armies reliant on long distance heavy artillery.

And both sides used poison gas bombs that could kill in seconds.

Crime

The war was a terrible crime by all Europe's imperialist powers—not least Britain. It saw horrendous battles.

German commander Erich von Falkenhayn later claimed that Verdun was a deliberate strategy to “bleed the French army dry”.

His French counterpart Philippe Pétain—later the puppet dictator of Nazi-occupied France—prolonged the horror by constantly rotating in fresh troops. Almost the entire French army had served in Verdun by the end.

The bulk of recruits were from villages untouched by the history of revolt that had shaped France's cities. But Verdun would breed despair, dissent and defiance.

A lieutenant later killed



Splintered trees turned to gibbets, heavy with dismembered limbs



Soldiers in the trenches at Verdun

by a shell wrote in his diary, “Humanity is mad. It must be mad to do what it is doing. What a massacre! What scenes of horror and carnage! I cannot find words to translate my impressions. Hell cannot be so terrible. Men are mad!”

Some soldiers deserted to Spain, others deliberately injured themselves to be sent home. Those caught were shot. Some 600 French soldiers were executed during the war, mostly for self-harm.

There were also forerunners of the mass mutinies that would paralyse the French army a year later.

In June episodes of “collective indiscipline” hit five infantry regiments.

Rising

The even bloodier battle of the Somme shifted the war's epicentre away from Verdun. But the film J'accuse, made during the war, was a powerful symbol of how it would haunt France long after.

The film ended with the war dead rising from their graves. The zombies were played by 2,000 real soldiers on leave from Verdun.

Within a few weeks, most of them had returned to the front and been killed.

The establishment used the sacrifice to try and boost patriotism, sometimes with success.

But for many veterans Verdun had discredited that establishment forever. Verdun survivors were part of a new left and mass strikes that shook France in the 1920s and 30s.

Troops from France's colonies had sacrificed as much as anyone. Many rallied to new movements for independence.

Dave Sewell

FLINT THE POISONING OF A U.S. CITY

The water crisis in Flint, Michigan, has shocked people across the world—and it's just the latest ruling class assault inflicted on ordinary people in the US city, writes **Alistair Farrow**

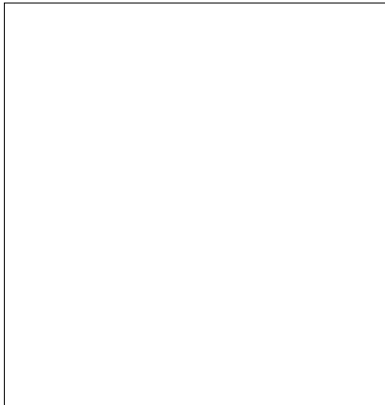
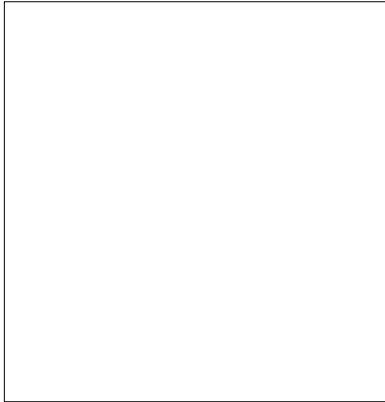
FOR NEARLY two years people in Flint, Michigan, have been drinking and bathing in water classified as “toxic waste”. Unelected “Emergency Manager” Darnell Earley switched the city's water supply from the freshwater Lake Huron to the toxic Flint River.

Water from the Flint River is 19 times more corrosive than that from Lake Huron, a Virginia Tech research team found.

This means that the lead pipes carrying the water corroded and the material entered the water supply. The entire population has been exposed to lead poisoning.

This can cause brain and kidney damage. It disproportionately affects young children and pregnant women, and can cause miscarriage.

And the crisis goes beyond lead poisoning. Doctors have found six other toxins in the blood of Flint residents. They do not yet know how this will impact on public health.



Administrator Darnell Earley (top) switched Flint's water supply to a toxic river. Now the water to people's homes is undrinkable (above)

Scandalously Flint's General Motors (GM) factory was supplied with non-toxic water from Lake Huron throughout this period. It was the only address in the city to be afforded the privilege.

GM had complained to the city management that Flint River water was causing the bodywork on its cars to corrode when used in production.

Yet GM's drinking fountains and ice machines remained linked up to the river water—exposing workers to the toxins while the cars were protected.

Those responsible have no interest in being held to account. Darnell Earley has refused to be questioned about the crisis by a congressional committee.

Indifference

Marc Edwards, one of the Virginia Tech academics who discovered the toxic water, gave evidence to the same committee earlier this month. He cited five falsified reports produced by various government agencies.

Edwards said, “The very agencies paid to protect us not only failed to do so, but also revealed their callous indifference to the plight of the most vulnerable.

“Had it not been for people completely outside the system, children in Flint would still be drinking that water today. That is a fact.”

Yet all this is just business as usual

for the ruling classes in Michigan. The current crisis is the latest abuse inflicted on a city that is over 55 percent black and where over 40 percent of people live in poverty.

In the mid-1960s toxic waste from the city's eight car plants was dumped into the Flint River at a rate of 26.5 million gallons a day.

The smoke from the factories covered working class neighbourhoods in dust, rusting metal and making people seriously ill.

People moved to Flint because GM promised them decent jobs. Its population was around 200,000 in the 1960s. Today it is around half that figure.

GM bosses have abandoned the workers who made them rich—and the government has abandoned them.

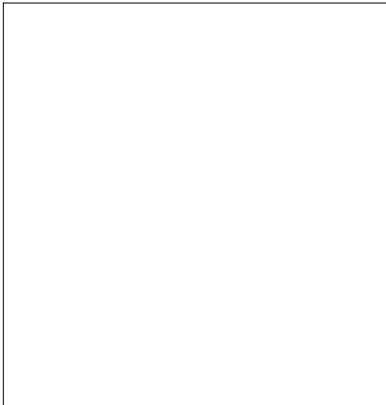
Instead the Republican governor installed unelected officials to run cities, stripping people of the few democratic rights they once had.

Despite all this, people are fighting back and organising.

Plumbers from across Michigan have volunteered to travel to Flint and install water filters in people's homes.

Over 1,000 people shouted down the governor of Michigan, Rick Snyder, at his “State of the State” event last month.

Calls for him and his staff to be held to account are increasing and over 550,000 people have signed a petition demanding Snyder's arrest.



Members of the plumbers' union volunteered to fit filters to people's taps for free (top) Flint and Detroit water samples (above)

GRANT WATCHES as his mother Ardis Porter has her blood tested for lead poisoning (left) Protests have swept the city (right) against Governor Rick Snyder (below) whose policies have poisoned Flint

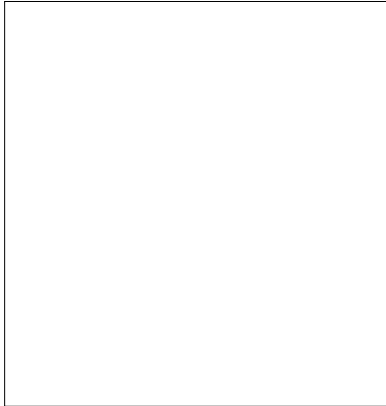
Snide Snyder led city to ruins

MICHIGAN GOVERNOR Rick Snyder took office in 2011. He cut city budgets then declared a state of emergency, claiming that cities were failing to provide basic services.

The state used P.A. 436, or the Emergency Managers law, to install unelected city governments to drive through further cuts. The switch from safe to toxic water in Flint saved the city £10 million in the short term, but could cost as much as £900 million to fix.

Leaked emails show that Rick Snyder's chief of staff, Dennis Muchmore, had informed him about Flint's toxic water.

Muchmore's wife, Deb Muchmore, happens to be Nestlé's spokesperson for Michigan. Nestlé has been sued for illegally extracting fresh water from underground springs that feed Lake Huron. It is now supplying bottled water to the city.



Snyder and other state officials did nothing to stop people from using the water until last month. They have consistently downplayed the crisis.

There is evidence that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) knew about the toxic water immediately after the switch. It may have failed to tell the state government or informed it secretly—keeping residents in the dark.

EPA regulator Miguel Del Toral

was one of the first to detect lead in Flint's water but his superiors blocked him from reporting his findings. He was prevented from giving evidence at a recent congressional hearing on the crisis.

One of his memos read, “The lead results were especially alarming given that the samples were collected using sampling procedures which minimize the capture of lead.”

Lee Anne Walters, whose house was among the first Del Toral tested, said, “We were still told the water was safe.”

The EPA has launched a review into its procedures for detecting contaminants in water. But the real problem is the disregard for working class lives shown by the state and other agencies. Officials put ordinary people's lives at risk to save money.

The scandal cuts across the political establishment—Snyder is a Republican and Earley is a Democrat—as well as the unelected branches of the state.

Handwriting from the political class does nothing for people whose lives have been destroyed.

A history of inspiring union resistance—and betrayal

AT THE height of the US motor industry, workers in Flint had the same standard of living as workers in any US city.

This was not because of bosses' generosity but thanks to a long history of militant working class organisation.

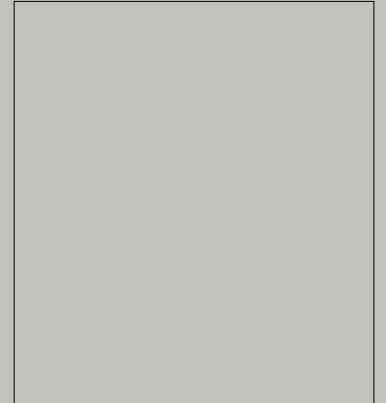
Today the average wage in Flint is \$23,380, or £15,961. That's \$5,500 less than the average US workers' wage.

Flint was the site of the great sit-in strike of 1936.

This was a central part of the highest point so far of class struggle in the US. Such strikes transformed the shape of the working class movement and built the new Congress of Industrial Organisations instead of the old heavily-bureaucratic unions.

The 44-day Flint sit-down strike was led by rank and file militants and socialists. It inspired workers across the country.

The company won an injunction against the strikers but it was never enforced after strikers revealed the judge owned £170,000 of GM shares. When Flint's police force



UAW union let down its members

attacked one of Flint's occupied plants, strikers fought back by hurling nuts and bolts and bottles.

In the 1960s General Motors (GM) employed around 80,000 workers in the city. Today it employs 4,000.

GM and other US car firms have seen a decline in profitability since the 1970s. This was partly due to competition from other manufacturers.

GM relocated some of its

plants to places such as Mexico, where it could pay workers as little as 49p per hour.

Yet the majority of its sites remain in the US, where it has launched a campaign of plant closures and wage cuts.

The company uses the threat of foreign relocation as a means of pressuring unions to accept these cuts.

The United Auto Workers union (UAW) has been encouraged to play its part in this process and given shares in GM.

The UAW has supported the employer's drive for “efficiency” in response to foreign competition and articulated this to workers.

The failure of union leaders in the US to challenge the idea that workers' lives depend on the shifts of capitalist markets is a tragedy.

WHAT WE STAND FOR

These are the core politics of the Socialist Workers Party.

INDEPENDENT WORKING CLASS ACTION

Under capitalism workers' labour creates all profit. A socialist society can only be constructed when the working class seizes control of the means of production and democratically plans how they are used.

REVOLUTION NOT REFORM

The present system cannot be patched up or reformed as the established Labour and trade union leaders say.

It has to be overthrown. Capitalism systematically degrades the natural world. Ending environmental crisis means creating a new society.

THERE IS NO PARLIAMENTARY ROAD

The structures of the present parliament, army, police and judiciary cannot be taken over and used by the working class. They grew up under capitalism and are designed to protect the ruling class against the workers.

The working class needs an entirely different kind of state—a workers' state based upon councils of workers' delegates and a workers' militia.

At most parliamentary activity can be used to make propaganda against the present system.

Only the mass action of the workers themselves can destroy the system.

INTERNATIONALISM

The struggle for socialism is part of a worldwide struggle. We campaign for solidarity with workers in other countries.

We oppose everything which turns workers from one country against those from other countries.

We oppose racism and imperialism. We oppose all immigration controls.

We support the right of black people and other oppressed groups to organise their own defence. We support all genuine national liberation movements.

The experience of Russia demonstrates that a socialist revolution cannot survive in isolation in one country.

In Russia the result was state capitalism, not socialism. In Eastern Europe and China a similar system was later established by Stalinist parties. We support the struggle of workers in these countries against both private and state capitalism.

We are for real social, economic and political equality of women. We are for an end to all forms of discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

We defend the right of believers to practise their religion without state interference.

THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

To achieve socialism the most militant sections of the working class have to be organised into a revolutionary socialist party.

Such a party can only be built by activity in the mass organisations of the working class.

We have to prove in practice to other workers that reformist leaders and reformist ideas are opposed to their own interests. We have to build a rank and file movement within the unions.

To join us, turn to page 16 or go to www.swp.org.uk or phone 020 7840 5602 for more information

{ SOCIALIST WORKER } PUBLIC MEETINGS

GLASGOW: SOUTH
Equal marriage, equal rights? How do we get real LGBT+ liberation?

Thu 18 Feb, 7.30pm,
Govanhill Baths,
99 Calder St,
G42 7RA

{ SOCIALIST WORKER } BRANCH MEETINGS

Weekly meetings to discuss political issues and our local interventions. All welcome.

ABERDEEN

The revolutionary ideas of Karl Marx

Thu 18 Feb, 6pm,
The Snug, Ma Cameron's,
6-8 Little Belmont St,
AB10 1JG

BARNLEY

The politics of fracking

Thu 18 Feb, 6.30pm,
YMCA,

Blucher St, S70 1AP

BIRMINGHAM: CITY CENTRE

Welfare not warfare—scrap Trident

Wed 17 Feb, 7pm,
Birmingham LGBT Centre,
38/40 Holloway Circus,
B1 1EQ

BOLTON

How we beat the anti-union laws in the past and how can we do it today?

Wed 17 Feb, 6.30pm,
Bolton Socialist Club,
16 Wood St (off Bradshawgate),
BL1 1DY

BRADFORD

China—crisis in the 21st Century?

Wed 17 Feb, 7pm,
Glyde House,
Glydegate, BD5 0BQ

BRIGHTON

How do we fight for LGBT+ liberation?

Wed 17 Feb, 7.30pm,
Friends Meeting House,
Ship St, BN1 1AF

BRISTOL

Can Corbynomics work?

Wed 17 Feb, 7.30pm,
YHA,
14 Narrow Quay,
BS1 4QA

CAMBRIDGE

Marxism and imperialism—why does capitalism create wars?

Thu 25 Feb, 7.30pm,
St Paul's,
Hills Rd, CB2 1JP

CARDIFF

Can Corbynomics work?

Wed 17 Feb, 7.30pm,
Cathays Community Centre,
Cathays Terrace, CF24 4HX

CHELMSFORD

The fight for the NHS

Thu 18 Feb, 7.30pm,
Friends Meeting House,
Rainsford Rd, CM1 2QL

CHESTERFIELD

This changes everything—capitalism vs the climate

Thu 18 Feb, 7.30pm,
Chesterfield Library,
New Beetwell St,
S40 1QN

COLCHESTER

Are we heading for another economic slump?

Wed 17 Feb, 7.30pm,
The Odd One Out,
28 Mersea Rd, CO2 7ET

COVENTRY

The socialist argument to leave the EU

Wed 17 Feb, 7.30pm,
West Indian Centre,
159 Spon St,
CV1 3BB

DONCASTER

Why do we need a revolutionary party?

Wed 24 Feb, 7.30pm,
Women's Centre,
21 Cleveland St,
DN1 3EH

STAND UP TO RACISM PUBLIC MEETINGS

Refugees Welcome Here—No to racism, Islamophobia and antisemitism

LONDON: EALING

Tue 23 Feb, 7.30pm,
St Mary's Church Hall,
St Mary's Rd,
W5 5RH

LONDON: HACKNEY

Wed 24 Feb, 7.30pm,
The Round Chapel,
2 Powerscroft Rd (corner Lower Clapton Rd),
E5 0PU

LONDON: TOTTENHAM

Tue 23 Feb, 7.30pm,
West Indian Cultural Centre,
9 Clarendon Rd,
N8 0DJ

DUDLEY

Missile madness—why we say Trident must go

Wed 17 Feb, 8pm,
The What Centre,
23 Coventry St,
DY8 1EP

DUNDEE

What do we say about Corbynism?

Wed 17 Feb, 7.30pm,
Dundee Voluntary Action,
10 Constitution Rd,
DD1 1LL

EDINBURGH

Pride, politics and protest—how do we win LGBT+ liberation?

Wed 17 Feb, 7.30pm,
Friends Meeting House,
7 Victoria St,
EH1 2JL

EXETER

The socialist argument to leave the EU

Thu 18 Feb, 7pm,
New Horizon Cafe,
47 Longbrook St,
EX4 6AW

GLASGOW: NORTH

Is Bernie Sanders the US's Jeremy Corbyn?

Wed 17 Feb, 7.30pm,
Posh Nosh Cafe,
86 Maryhill Rd,
G20 7QB

HARLOW

Pride, politics and protest—a Marxist analysis of LGBT+ oppression

Thu 25 Feb, 7.30pm,
Friends Meeting House,
1 Church Leys,
CM18 6BX

HUDDERSFIELD

Why does capitalism lead to war?

Wed 17 Feb, 6.30pm,
Brian Jackson House,
2 New North Parade (near both train and bus stations),
HD1 5JP

LANCASTER

What are the prospects for socialism in 2016?

Thu 18 Feb, 7pm,
Friends Meeting House,
Meeting House Lane,
LA1 1TX

LEEDS: CITY CENTRE

After equal marriage—are we liberated?

Thu 18 Feb, 7pm,
The Swarthmore Education Centre,
2-7 Woodhouse Square,
LS3 1AD

LONDON: TOWER HAMLETS

Thu 3 Mar, 4.15pm,
London Muslim Centre,
46 Whitechapel Rd,
E1 1JX

MANCHESTER

Tue 1 Mar, 7pm,
Friends Meeting House, 6 Mount St,
M2 5NS

SHEFFIELD

Mon 15 Feb, 7pm,
Sheffield Hallam University,
Owen Building,
Pennine Lecture Theatre,
S1 1WB

LIVERPOOL

The rise of the Nazi Front National in France—how can it be stopped?

Wed 17 Feb, 7pm,
The Abbey Pub,
85-89 Hanover St,
L1 3DZ

LONDON: BRENT AND HARROW

What do we say about Corbynism?

Thu 18 Feb, 7.30pm,
The Pepperpot Centre,
1a Thorpe Close,
Ladbroke Grove (very close to the station),
W10 5XL

LONDON: Brixton

Marxism and imperialism—why does capitalism create wars?

Wed 17 Feb, 7pm,
Vida Walsh Centre,
2b Saltoun Rd (near Effra Rd, facing Windrush Square),
SW2 1EP

LONDON: CAMDEN

War on Terror to Prevent—Islamophobia today

Thu 18 Feb, 7pm,
Chadwick Building, room G07,
University College London,
Gower St,
WC1E 6BT

LONDON: EALING

How can Palestine be free?

Thu 18 Feb, 7.30pm,
West London Trade Union Club,
33-35 High St,
Acton,
W3 6ND

LONDON: HACKNEY

Are we heading for another economic slump?

Thu 18 Feb, 7.30pm,
The Round Chapel,
2 Powerscroft Rd (corner Lower Clapton Rd),
E5 0PU

LONDON: HARINGEY

Can Corbynomics work?

Wed 17 Feb, 7.30pm,
St John Vianney,
4 Vincent Rd,
N15 3QH

LONDON: ISLINGTON

Marxism and Women's liberation

Thu 18 Feb, 7pm,
The Old Fire Station,
84 Mayton St,
N7 6QT

LONDON: KINGSTON

Stop bombing Syria—no to war in the Middle East

Thu 18 Feb, 7pm,
Kingston Quaker Centre,
Fairfield East,
KT1 2PT

LONDON: LEWISHAM

Missile madness—why we say Trident must go

Wed 17 Feb, 7.30pm,
West Greenwich Community and Arts Centre,
141 Greenwich High Rd (near Greenwich main line and DLR station),
SE10 8JA

LONDON: NEWHAM

From the US to China—why does capitalism cause crisis?

Wed 17 Feb, 7pm,
Stratford Advice Arcade,
107-109 The Grove (next to Morrisons car park),
E15 1HP

LONDON: SOUTHWARK

Can change come through Parliament?

Thu 18 Feb, 7pm,
Camberwell Leisure Centre (room 2),
Artichoke Place (Off Camberwell Church St),
SE5 8TS

LONDON: TOWER HAMLETS
Marxism and imperialism—why does capitalism lead to war?

Wed 17 Feb, 7pm,
Oxford House,
Derbyshire St (opposite Bethnal Green Rd Tesco),
E2 6HG

LONDON: WALTHAM FOREST

Bob Marley—Roots, Reggae & Revolution

Wed 17 Feb, 7.30pm,
Quaker Meeting House,
1a Jewel Road (off Hoe St),
E17 4QU

MANCHESTER: CHORLTON

Are we heading for another economic slump?

Wed 17 Feb, 7pm,
Chorlton Central Church Meeting Room,
Barlow Moor Rd,
M21 8BF

MANCHESTER: CITY CENTRE

Are we heading for another economic slump?

Thu 18 Feb, 7pm,
Friends Meeting House,
6 Mount St,
M2 5NS

MEDWAY

War on Terror to Prevent—Islamophobia today

Thu 25 Feb, 7.30pm,
Nucleus Arts Centre,
Conference Room,
272 High St,
ME4 4BP

NEWCASTLE

The socialist argument to leave the EU

Thu 18 Feb, 7pm,
The Labour Club,
11 Leazes Park Rd,
NE1 4PF

NORTHAMPTON

Fortress Europe and the fight for free movement

Wed 17 Feb, 7.30pm,
The Lab,
95-97 Charles St,
NN1 3BG

NORWICH

China—crisis in the 21st century?

Thu 18 Feb, 7.30pm,
Vauxhall Centre,
Johnson Place,
NR2 2SA

NOTTINGHAM

An introduction to Marxist economics

Wed 17 Feb, 7.30pm,
International Community Centre,
61b Mansfield Rd,
NG1 3FN

OXFORD

EU—should we stay in or get out?

Wed 17 Feb, 7.30pm,
Restore,
Manzil Way (off Cowley Rd),
OX4 1YH

POOLE

What do we mean by the united front?

Mon 15 Feb, 7.30pm,
The Blue Boar,
29 Market Close,
BH15 1NE

PORTSMOUTH

Missile madness—why we say Trident must go

Wed 17 Feb, 7.30pm,
Somerstown Central,
Rivers St,
PO5 4EY

ROTHERHAM

The Middle East, imperialism and Isis

Wed 24 Feb, 7pm,
Talbot Lane Methodist Church Centre,
Moorgate St,
S60 2EY

SHEFFIELD: CITY CENTRE

Not for sale—the fight for council housing for all

Thu 18 Feb, 7.30pm,
Central United Reformed Church,
60 Norfolk St (near the Crucible Theatre),
S1 2JB

SOUTHAMPTON

Fortress Europe and the fight for free movement

Wed 17 Feb, 7.30pm,
Central Baptist Church Hall,
Devonshire Rd,
SO15 2GY

STALBANS

Is Bernie Sanders the US's Jeremy Corbyn?

Wed 2 Mar, 7.30pm,
Trinity Church Hall (upstairs),
1 Beaconsfield Rd (near St Albans City station),
AL1 3RD

SWANSEA

Missile madness—why we say Trident must go

Thu 18 Feb, 7.30pm,
Brynmill Community Centre,
St Albans Rd, SA2 0BP

TELFORD

How do we stop the Tories destroying the NHS?

Thu 18 Feb, 7.30pm,
Carriages,
The Parade,
Wellington, TF1 1PY

WAKEFIELD

Islamophobia and the Prevent agenda—what should socialists say and do?

Thu 18 Feb, 7pm,
Lightwaves Centre,
Lower York St, WF1 3LJ

WIGAN

War on Terror to Prevent—Islamophobia today

Wed 17 Feb, 7pm,
Little Fifteen pub,
17-19 Wallgate (opposite Wigan Post Office),
WN1 1LD

WOLVERHAMPTON AND WALSALL

No to immigration controls—open the borders

Wed 17 Feb, 7.30pm,
Grain Store,
King St,
WV1 1ST

YORK

Can Corbyn end the economic crisis?

Wed 17 Feb, 7.30pm,
Sea Horse Hotel,
4 Fawcett St,
YO10 4AH

{ MOVEMENT EVENTS }

DORSET SOCIALISTS

The forgotten refugee camp where lives are left in limbo

New book *City of Thorns* uses interviews to build a powerful picture of the lives of refugees in the world's largest camp in Kenya, writes **Ken Olende**

DADAAB IS the world's largest refugee camp, but it lies forgotten in the scrublands of northern Kenya.

It has roughly the same population as Leicester, some 500,000 people. Most have fled from neighbouring Somalia.

But the Kenyan government has also placed people fleeing Sudan there, out of the way.

Author Ben Rawlence visited Dadaab with the NGO Human Rights Watch.

He has built a powerful picture of life in the camp through exhaustive interviews with nine residents about their lives and their hopes.

Tawane grew up in Dadaab, but is now a youth leader, taking risks for Western aid workers too scared to leave their compounds.

Muna is a Somali woman who arrived at the camp as a baby. She is now under threat from her family for marrying a Sudanese man. Others have fled famine or more recent wars.

Rawlence says Dadaab is "the meeting point between two contradictory arcs of the twenty-first century: the rule of law that had spawned the international humanitarian system and...the chaos unleashed by the end of the colonial project to subjugate and carve up the globe."

He shows how Kenya's invasion of Somalia in 2011 was not the simple anti-terrorist manoeuvre it was presented as at the time. And it made the situation much worse for the refugees.

The refugees are not allowed to work. But they cannot survive on United Nations rations alone, particularly as they have to constantly pay bribes to police and officials.

So a vast and complex black market has grown up.

The refugees dream of being resettled in the West, as a tiny minority of others have been.

Rawlence writes, "The young men and women at the youth centre were the ones left behind, who followed the progress of their friends abroad on Facebook."

They set the nightmare of their current lives in limbo against the risk and expense of trying to get to the West.

City of Thorns by Ben Rawlence. Portobello £14.99. Available from Bookmarks. Go to bookmarks.bookshop.co.uk or phone 020 7637 1848

Electronic Superhighway



EXCELLENCES & Perfections (2014-15)

PICTURE: AMALIA ULMAN

How the internet has transformed art

EXHIBITION

ELECTRONIC Superhighway showcases over 100 artworks that look at the impact of computer and internet technology on artists from the mid-1960s to today.

The exhibition includes film, painting, photography, drawing and sculpture by more than 70 artists. Artists explore as

digital image manipulation and authenticity. —

A series of photographs from conceptual artist Amalia Ulman look at the impact of social media on attitudes towards the female body (above).

International artists and collectives examine the dot-com boom from the late 1990s.

The works are arranged in reverse chronological order. As the exhibition travels back in

time, key moments in the history of art and the internet are revealed.

The gallery is hosting a series of free related projects, displays and events on various dates until June.

Electronic Superhighway is on at the Whitechapel Gallery, 77-82 Whitechapel High St, London E1 7QX until 15 May. Admission £13.50 or £11.95 without Gift Aid donation. whitechapelgallery.org

PODCAST

THE DANIEL MORGAN MURDER: A 10-PART PODCAST SERIAL

Produced by Flameflower Studios—

ALASTAIR MORGAN speaks to journalist and screenwriter Peter Jukes about the murder of his brother Daniel Morgan.

Daniel Morgan was found in a south east London car park with an axe in his head in March 1987.

Evidence has linked the murder to Rupert Murdoch's News International.

Daniel Morgan carried out investigations for Southern Investigations.

This agency also ran a number of dodgy information gathering activities for the News of the World from as early as 1987.

The murder case has been investigated five times by the Metropolitan Police.

The Met has admitted corruption and a cover-up in their ranks.

The podcasts will reveal



Daniel Morgan

the obstructions Alastair has faced in getting to the truth about his brother's murder.

They show how the implications of Daniel Morgan's murder "reach from the top of the Metropolitan Police, from chief figures in the media to the doors of No 10 Downing Street".

Alastair hopes the podcasts will help to "expose the corruption I've seen".

He said, "The system has failed me completely on every level."

"Three decades after this murder, the questions are still as disturbing and upsetting to me now as they were when Daniel was killed."

The podcasts have been funded by supporters' donations and organisers hope to release them in the spring.

For more on the podcasts go to byline.com/project/35 For more on the Daniel Morgan case go to bit.ly/1TG5qg0



Author Ben Rawlence

What's the row with EU leaders really about?

THE EUROPEAN Union (EU) is in the midst of a deep crisis and its rulers are desperate to hold their project together.

If Britain left the EU, it could bust it open. Five years of harsh austerity and billion pound bailouts haven't solved the eurozone crisis.

With the global economy verging on another slump and the EU's trading partner China mired in stagnation, it wouldn't take much for it to explode once more.

Top accountants PwC warned recently that the Greek debt crisis could flare up again and spread to other countries.

Nor were Fortress Europe's barbed wire and border walls able to stop one of the largest migrations of refugees fleeing the West's wars and poverty.

Border controls are even being reimposed within the EU's Schengen space.

To contain this crisis even such pro-Europeans as German chancellor Angela Merkel have been willing to negotiate new terms for Britain's membership.

But David Cameron's sabre rattling has more to do with a political crisis within the Tory party.

Once a fringe group, the eurosceptics now call the shots.

The Tories' friends in big business and the City of London are desperately trying to overcome British capitalism's long-term crisis of profitability.

The Tories are also hoping to outflank Ukip on the right by using the EU referendum to ramp up racism against migrant workers.

How will the deal affect EU migrants?

CAMERON'S proposed deal is a thoroughly reactionary document that makes it easier for the Tories to attack migrant workers.

He boasted that he'd won "an emergency brake that will mean people coming to Britain will have to wait four years until they have full access to our benefits".

This falls short of what he wanted—a blanket four-year ban on migrants claiming any benefits.

To spin himself out of his disappointment, Cameron also claimed migrants who hadn't found work within six months would have to leave. That's not even in the deal.

The "emergency brake" only applies to in-work benefits such as tax credits—and it depends on agreement from the EU council.

It's still not clear whether or for how long the Tories would be allowed to apply it, and it

City of London, global casino (above), David Cameron and European Council president Donald Tusk try to cut a deal (right)

would only affect a minority of EU migrants. If applied four years ago it would have hit just 84,000 households—compared to the 718,000 EU migrants who arrived in just one year.

Far from a drain on the welfare system, this is a tiny amount of money from people who contribute more in tax than they receive in welfare.

But the plans would still force migrants on low wages into poverty. They fuel racist scapegoating and chip away further at the idea of universal benefits.

Is the proposal only about immigration?

AS WELL as scapegoating migrants, Cameron hopes to bolster British capitalism's global position.

While most capitalists want to remain in the EU, they are also debating how they can most effectively push their interests within it.

Despite buzzwords about "competitiveness" the deal has nothing to do with helping small businesses and farmers.

It's about defending the City of London from regulations so it remains the world's premier casino.

The deal reinforces the EU's neoliberalism. It doesn't go far enough for many right wing Tories.

But the EU has made clear that it isn't willing to make anymore fundamental concessions.



Cameron's deal is a charter for bosses and racists

SO WHAT'S THE DEAL?

How did a dull document about the European Union get the Tories at each other's throats? **Tomáš Tengely-Evans** explains

What is Labour saying about it?

LABOUR LEADER Jeremy Corbyn dismissed the negotiation as a "Tory party drama" with no real consequences.

But Labour is defending the EU on similar terms to Cameron.

Last year all the Labour leadership candidates said they wouldn't share a platform with Cameron. Now Blairite Chuka Umunna has said he would.

Labour right winger Caroline Flint congratulated "the prime minister on his progress in tackling what voters for all parties see as unfairness

in the freedom of movement—not to work, but in some cases freedom of movement to claim benefits here in the UK".

For good measure she also attacked refugees.

"If we left the European Union, would it put at risk our co-operation with the French authorities in Calais to protect UK borders?" she asked.

Even some on the left and in the trade unions are aping the arguments of the right. They argue that bosses use free movement of labour to undermine wages.

Corbyn himself said, "What the prime minister calls the strongest package ever on the abuse of the free movement does not actually begin to tackle

the real problems around the impact of migration on jobs, wages and communities". Migrant workers don't drive down wages—and they can be part of struggles to push them up. But scapegoating helps bosses avoid resistance as they attack pay and conditions.



Pro-refugee protesters in Greece blame the EU for deaths

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

Most bosses back the EU, so why don't most Tories?

THE TORIES' splits are rooted in real divisions within the ruling class about how to deal with Britain's long term decline as a world power.

The overwhelming majority of capitalists rely on the EU for their profits.

This is different to the period after the Second World War when bosses' profits still came from the old Empire. Britain initially refused to join the European economic project.

But after Britain was humiliated during its unsuccessful invasion of Egypt in 1956 there was no denying Britain's imperial decline.

Tory prime minister Harold Macmillan applied to join the EU's forerunner in the hope of carving out a new imperialist role for Britain.

It was another Tory prime minister, Edward Heath, who finally brought Britain into the then Common Market in 1973.

A minority of Tory MPs dissented, such as the notorious racist Enoch Powell. But opposition mainly came from the Labour left.

Tories overwhelmingly supported

Margaret Thatcher

European integration—including Margaret Thatcher during the early 1980s.

But the failure of her government's economic policies provoked a split. After a deep slump in 1987 the chancellor Nigel Lawson pinned the pound to the German currency.

He hoped to stabilise Britain's economy and rebuild the shattered manufacturing sector. But many Tories saw it as "German domination".

These right wingers saw the future of British capitalism in the City—an offshore casino gambling with the rest of the world's money.

At first Euroscepticism was a minority. But it became a lightning rod for discontent and frustration in the party.

This mood grew on the backbenches and the grassroots. After their defeat in 1997 the Tories consistently chose Eurosceptic leaders.

The old pro-EU Tory establishment became the new tiny minority, with the party now reliant on Euroscepticism to whip up support.

What should socialists do?

The majority of the left has lined up on the Remain side, because it sees the EU as a guarantor of workers' and migrants' rights.

Activists point out that Ukip and the Tory right will use racism as part of the Leave camp.

But many are lining up with the right in the Remain camp.

Left wing Green MP Caroline Lucas has spoken alongside former M&S boss Sir Stuart

Rose. Cameron's deal is supposed to make the case for the EU—and it is a bosses' and racists' charter.

He is campaigning to Remain on the basis of more attacks.

Socialists must put forward an alternative to the austerity and racism of both the EU and the Eurosceptic right.

That means arguing to break with the EU on a socialist and internationalist basis.

A vote to Leave would send shockwaves through the Tories and cause a political crisis—the left must be in a position to shape it.



Defiant airline strikers are waking the working class

The killings of two PIA airline workers have shocked the country—and become a rallying cry for more protests, reports **Riaz Ahmed**

TWO WORKERS, ground engineer Saleem Akbar and senior manager Inayet Raza Rizvi, were killed on Tuesday of this week.

The military opened fire at thousands of people marching towards Karachi's airport terminal.

The workers were protesting against proposed privatisation of the national carrier, Pakistan International Airlines (PIA).

The deaths initially horrified people, but soon became the rallying cry for hundreds of thousands of workers across the country to take action.

There have been solidarity demonstrations in small towns as well as large ones, and vows to fight side by side with PIA workers.

Political parties, student groups, left groups, journalists, electricity workers and even some religious parties came out denouncing the killings.

The entire opposition in the National Assembly condemned the killings.

Imran Khan's PTI party, itself carrying out privatisation of hospitals in PTI-ruled province Khyber Pukhtoon, called for a national day of action last weekend.

Galvanised

The fightback by the airline workers has galvanised workers facing the axe of privatisation.

Prime minister Nawaz Sharif began the recent privatisation process with a bang by directly threatening PIA workers a day before the killings.

He enforced the Essential Services Act for six months, barring PIA workers from participating in any union activity.

The act means strikers can be imprisoned for up to a year.

Information minister



PROTEST OVER the killing of striking PIA airline worker Inayet Raza Rizvi

PICTURE: SALMAN RIZVI

BACK STORY

Backed by the military, Pakistani prime minister Nawaz Sharif is developing the economy for capitalists

●As part of this he wants to privatise airline PIA. Many believe it is to be handed to close associates

●PIA workers walked out on strike to stop the privatisation last week

●The army opened fire on a march, killing two workers

●The killings have led to denunciations and protests

class from a deep slumber.

PIA flights stand cancelled and airline workers across the country have joined the strike.

Workers and activists believe that after privatisation PIA will be handed to a strategic partner involving Nawaz Sharif and his brother Shahbaz.

Rules

Shahbaz rules the Punjab province and both brothers have over the past year launched hundreds of small and large development projects involving Chinese and Turkish companies. These include the £30 billion China Pakistan Economic Corridor.

Along with the mega projects they have championed targeting "terrorists"—anyone opposing projects in the provinces of Balochistan or Sindh.

Sharif now has the full support of the military in realising the dream of economic transformation for capitalists in Pakistan through investments from China and loans from the West.

The fantastic struggle and sacrifices by PIA workers have transformed a huge section of the working class.

Riaz Ahmed is a leading member of the Inqilabi Socialists Pakistan, sister organisation of the Socialist Workers Party

There have been solidarity demonstrations in small towns as well as large

Racist Eurosceptics such as Ukip are having a field day



Liverpool fans defy ticket price hike

by **ROY BENTHAM**, Football Supporters Federation National Council and Spirit of Shankly Management Committee

ANFIELD FOOTBALL ground in Liverpool saw a major demonstration over soaring Premier League ticket prices last Saturday.

Liverpool FC announced next season's pricing structures last week. A match ticket will now cost £77 and season tickets will also top £1,000 for the first time ever.

Before kick off on Saturday black flags and protest banners replaced the usual array of colourful flags on the Kop terraces.

Some 77 minutes into the match ten to 15,000 fans left the ground to protest against the new price proposals by the owners, hedge fund Fenway Sports Group.

Targeted

Further actions in and around the ground are currently being discussed by SpionKop1906 and Spirit of Shankly, the two fan organisations that coordinated the day's events.

Liverpool Football Club's sponsors are being targeted too. The fast food chain Subway will be first in the firing line.



FANS FLY black flags in protest

Messages of support came from other fans' trusts including Tottenham Hotspur, Arsenal, Everton, Manchester United and Manchester City fans' trust MCFC1894. Sunderland fans present at the stadium on

the day also clapped in support.

And a number of other fan groups sent best wishes, including Aston Villa and West Ham and lower League fans also wished us success. The Football Supporters

Federation and Football Supporters Europe sent messages of solidarity.

Political support came from Shadow Chancellor John McDonnell, a lifelong Liverpool supporter. He said, "In the Liverpool

spirit I hope that the club will get round the table with supporters and work out a deal that doesn't price local fans out of the game."

Money from next season's national and international television rights, £8.3 billion in total, will be carved up between the top tier clubs in London next month.

Prices

The Football Supporters Federation (FSF) has long argued these astronomical figures should be used to significantly reduce ticket prices throughout the Premier League.

Instead, owners at Liverpool and other clubs are pushing prices up.

Saturday's protest will reverberate throughout the football establishment.

It's crucial that Liverpool supporters win this battle for affordable football.

The implications for football fans around the country could be massive. For future generations of match goers, it's a war on greed we cannot afford to lose.

More online

For more coverage of the week's news, go to socialistworker.co.uk

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Accused in child abuse trial was a police cadet

by SADIE ROBINSON

A DEFENDANT in the Rotherham child sexual abuse trial was a police cadet when the alleged offences took place, Sheffield Crown Court has heard.

Five men and two women deny around 60 charges relating to offences that allegedly took place between 1987 and 2003.

Sajid Bostan faces seven charges, including rape and serious sexual assault, relating to complainant Girl B. She said the alleged offences mainly took place during the 1990s.

Bostan said he had done work experience with South Yorkshire Police in 1993 and later joined the cadets. He said he patrolled Rotherham town centre with officers and was an extra pair of “eyes and ears” for the police.

He said he resigned from the cadets in 1996 after being charged with two counts of affray. He was later convicted. Bostan told the court he first met Girl B in 2000 and had a “fling” with her.

Accepted

He initially said he didn’t know co-defendant Arshid Hussain. Under cross-examination he accepted he had told police he did know who Hussain was.

Bostan said he had never been to the Prince of Wales pub in Masbrough, where he and Arshid Hussain are alleged to have raped Girl B. Arshid Hussain appeared in court for the first time but was said to be too ill to give evidence.

Judge Sarah Wright instructed the jury to find Arshid Hussain not guilty of one count of abduction of Girl J. This was because “she was allowed out by her foster carer”.

Arshid Hussain now faces 28 charges—five relating to Girl J and the rest relating to eight other complainants. His lawyer, Tahir



A SIGN for South Yorkshire Police

Khan, read a statement for Arshid Hussain to the court. In it he said he was “no angel” but that the allegations against him were “completely wrong”.

Arshid Hussain denied knowing two of the complainants. He said he had never visited the Prince of Wales pub. He accepted having a child with Girl J which was conceived when she was 15 years old.

The court heard that Girl D told social workers Arshid Hussain was her boyfriend when she was younger. Hussain claimed he has never met Girl D.

Records from the Risky Business service, which supported vulnerable children, show Girl D mentioned “Mad A, saying she had been to Halifax with him a few times, but didn’t say why.”

Defendant Karen MacGregor told the court there is “no truth whatsoever” in allegations that she had been “pimping girls from children’s homes”.

Grave

Defendant Basharat Hussain has also denied a number of offences relating to four alleged victims. He told the court that he “loved” Girl L, who has said he once told her to “dig her own grave”.

He accepted having sex with three teenage girls when he was in his 20s.

Basharat Hussain told the court he didn’t know any corrupt police officers and had never asked any to search the national database for him. He said he knew PC Kenneth Dawes because “he was well known in the area”.

The court has heard that Dawes had used the police database “without legitimate policing purpose” and searched for Arshid Hussain, Basharat Hussain and a key witness.

Dawes denies all wrongdoing. Dawes is under investigation by South Yorkshire Police and the Independent Police Complaints Commission. He “is currently suspended from duty”.

The jury also heard that Dawes admitted wrongdoing at misconduct hearings between 2000 and 2003.

PC Hassan Ali, who died last year, also searched police databases for Arshid and Basharat Hussain.

Defendants Majid Bostan and Shelley Davies have decided not to give evidence in the trial, which continues.

BENEFITS

Reports slam Duncan Smith credits

by DAVE SEWELL

HATED TORY axeman Iain Duncan Smith’s flagship welfare reform will make working families poorer and is mired in worse delays than ever, two new reports revealed.

Universal Credit (UC) rolls six working age benefits into one payment paid in a different way.

In areas where UC is being trialled it has already brought misery.

A report by the Institute of Fiscal Studies think tank (IFS) says that working families will lose out under UC.

Some 2.1 million will lose an average of £1,600 a year—considerably more than the number that will gain.

Found

It found that in total UC would cut £2.7 billion from welfare spending a year.

The IFS buys into the government’s line that benefit cuts are about “incentivising work”.

It looked for cases where



Hated: Duncan Smith

people lose more in benefits than they gain in wages by taking on a small amount of paid work.

But even here the report found UC created such instances as well as getting rid of them.

It means single parents will lose more if they work—and couples will lose more if both of them work.

MPs on the public accounts committee also released their report on UC this week—and found the government had lied about getting people into work.

The government had said unemployed people were seven or eight percent more likely to find work when on UC than on jobseeker’s allowance.

But its own figures put the effect between three and six percent for people in “straightforward circumstances”—and none for those in “more complex circumstances”.

The costs have also spiralled to almost £16 billion from a predicted £2.2 billion.

ISLAMOPHOBIA

Government watchdog criticises anti-Muslim Prevent

THE GOVERNMENT’S own terror watchdog has called for an independent review into its Prevent strategy.

David Anderson QC, who reviews anti-terror legislation, said, “The lack of transparency in the operation of Prevent encourages rumour and mistrust to spread and fester.”

Writing to the home affairs select committee, Anderson added that “it is also possible that aspects of the programme are being

applied in an insensitive or discriminatory manner”.

Prevent forces public sector workers to spy for signs of “radicalisation”—mainly targeting Muslims.

But Anderson’s comments show the growing pressure the government is under as Muslims refuse to be silenced.

Over 100 people attended a meeting against Prevent in east London last week.



David Anderson

It was organised by the Waltham Forest Council of Mosques and the Stand Up to Racism campaign.

At the meeting Shazia from east London told Socialist Worker, “You have to take the lifeblood away from Prevent.”

“It’s the idea that Islam leads to violence. We have to be a lot more confident as Muslims to speak out against it.”

Ifhat Smith told the meeting,

“I do want Prevent removed—if there’s an injustice happening it should be stopped.”

Her 14 year old son was pulled out of class at school and asked if he was affiliated to Isis for using the word “eco terrorism”.

The meeting heard from a number of trade union and activist speakers who talked about making links with Muslims under attack.

Tomáš Tengely-Evans

For a longer version of this story go to bit.ly/1VUxvPp

IN BRIEF

Week-long walkout against library cuts

STRIKING LIBRARY workers braved strong winds to leaflet the public outside Bromley Central library in south London on Monday of this week.

It was the third day of a week-long strike against library cuts.

●Send messages of solidarity to bromleyunite1@outlook.com

Post workers meet ahead of pay talks

MEMBERS OF the CWU union met in London on Wednesday of last week to discuss the union's position in upcoming pay talks with Royal Mail.

It came as the government announced it was to sell off its remaining stake in the previously publicly-owned postal service.

CWU assistant secretary Andy Furey said, "We are not going to let our members be threatened with compulsory redundancy, have their pensions scheme scrapped and get no pay rises."

NUJ union keeps FT's presses rolling

THE NUJ union called off a planned strike by Financial Times (FT) journalists at the last minute. They were set to strike on Thursday of last week.

The NUJ union members are fighting to defend their pensions.

Talks at conciliation service Acas produced a new offer. But some journalists could still lose as much as 15 percent of their pensions.

NUJ members are voting on the offer in a consultative ballot which ends on Monday.

Mushin Ahmed trial begins in Sheffield

A TRIAL of two men charged with the murder of pensioner Mushin Ahmed began on Tuesday of this week at Sheffield Crown Court.

Mushin Ahmed was found injured in Rotherham, south Yorkshire, in the early hours of 10 August last year and died 11 days later.

Damien Hunt and Dale Jones have been charged with his murder. The trial continues.

Day of action over Sports Direct

UNITE UNION activists were set to hold a nationwide day of action against retail giant Sports Direct this Saturday.

They are demanding that the retailer signs up to the living wage, ends "Victorian work practices" and transfers agency workers onto permanent, fixed hour contracts.

●Sign Unite's petition Sports Direct: stop your shameful work practices tinyurl.com/jck6nba
Follow the Twitter hashtag #SportsDirectShame

HOTEL WORKERS

A well-done tips protest

MEMBERS OF the Unite union's hotel workers' branch held lively protests outside the STK steak house in central London on Friday and Saturday of last week.

Bosses at STK have been using waiters' tips to top up their own salaries.

STK pays its managers and workers the same minimum wage rate.

But Unite says service charges have been used to

top up the salaries of four senior managers to as much as £50,000.

Unite national officer Rhys McCarthy said, "Restaurants and bars were banned from using tips to top up staff wages to the legal national minimum back in 2009."

"But that clearly hasn't stopped STK from finding a nifty loophole to subsidise managers' wages."

Nick Clark



UNITE'S HOTEL workers' branch demands waiters get their tips

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

EDUCATION

FURTHER EDUCATION

College workers gear up for joint pay strike

by SADIE ROBINSON

FURTHER EDUCATION (FE) lecturers and support staff have announced an England-wide strike for Wednesday 24 February.

The UCU and Unison union members are furious that bosses imposed a zero percent pay deal this year.

Sean Vernell is a UCU rep at City and Islington College in north London. He said, "This is the first time in ten years that there's been a joint national strike across all English colleges."

"UCU and Unison members have seen their pay cut in real terms by 15 percent over the last five years."

"We are demanding £1 an hour extra for all."

Fuelling

Bosses' insulting pay deal isn't the only thing fuelling workers' anger.

The Tories have slashed funding for further and adult education.

Now they are holding "area reviews" that aim to push through mergers and closures.

All of this makes it harder for working class people to get



PICKETS AT City and Islington College last November

PICTURE: MICHAEL BRADLEY

an education.

Sean said, "Staff face spiralling workloads. It's nearly impossible for them to carry out their jobs effectively."

"Over a million student places have gone since 2010—it's a national scandal."

"But not everything is being cut. Only one thing rises in further education every year—principals' pay."

The walkout takes place as NUT union members in sixth form colleges ballot for strikes over cuts.

If workers vote for strikes,

the union plans a walkout and a national demonstration for members on 15 March.

Coordinating these fights and getting students involved can build a powerful campaign that can defend education from Tory attacks.

●UCU London Region has called a conference on defending further and adult education for 5 March in London. Go to bit.ly/23SvXuY for details.

Vote for the left in UCU elections. Go to bit.ly/1nXHOHY for details

SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGNS

Activists build Kurdish solidarity demo

TURKISH STATE forces massacred 60 people in a basement in the Kurdish district of Cizre on Sunday of last week.

There is strong evidence that it was a mass execution planned in advance and was designed to break Kurdish resistance.

Nine people were burned to death and one child was shot by state forces in another basement a few days earlier.

The authorities imposed a lockdown in the area last December, preventing any movement or normal life.

These murders have given further impetus to solidarity activists in Britain.

Impetus

They are building for the first national Kurdish solidarity demonstration in Britain.

The demonstration is set to take place on 6 March and will assemble at 12 noon at

the BBC in Portland Place in central London.

It's slogans are "Break the Silence" and "Stop Turkey's War on the Kurds".

One of the demands is for the British government to put pressure on Turkey to stop these attacks and return to negotiations with the Kurdish liberation movement.

●Go to the Facebook event Stop Turkey's War on the Kurds! Break the Silence!

SCOTTISH COLLEGES



Lecturers lobby the Scottish funding council last December

PICTURE: RICHIE BISSET

Scottish lecturers plan to teach the SNP a lesson

by PENNY GOWER, EIS council (pc)

COLLEGE LECTURERS in the EIS-Fela union were set to begin a strike ballot over pay on Friday of this week.

It follows a thumping 92 percent vote for strikes in an indicative ballot last December.

Lecturers have been demanding equal pay across Scotland since the Scottish National Party (SNP) government ordered a return to national pay bargaining in October 2014.

Their wages can range from £24,000 to £39,000 a year.

Refusing

But several colleges are refusing to be part of national bargaining.

Scottish college bosses also announced last week that they are imposing a one percent pay deal, which will widen pay differences.

John Kelly, the EIS-Fela FE president, said, "It has

become increasingly obvious that colleges are playing a game of brinksmanship, and will only give ground when they are challenged."

"This means that EIS members in colleges must step up and be willing to take action, for without your action, colleges will continue to treat staff as badly as they can get away with."

Signed

Lecturers in colleges that haven't signed up to national bargaining will be balloted separately to force their managements into line.

There is a lot at stake. The SNP's anti-austerity credentials are tarnished by the cuts it is meting out in FE. If the dispute is not resolved quickly, action could take place in the run-up to the Scottish parliamentary elections in May.

John Kelly said, "If we are to win a fair pay rise and equalise pay we have no alternative but to vote yes in the ballot."

SCHOOLS

NUT UNION members at Spalding Grammar School in Lincolnshire have voted unanimously for strikes over pay.

They are in dispute after bosses refused to grant them a 1 percent pay rise that other teachers have received.

NUT regional officer Nick Raine said that a huge

turnout of just under 78 percent showed "the strong feelings" of teachers."

He said, "Despite facing potentially days of strikes school management have never met with me and there are no ongoing negotiations or meetings planned."

"This makes strikes inevitable."

CONSTRUCTION

'Job is a nightmare' say striking crane workers

by SIMON BASKETTER

SOME 500 crane operators and support staff working for Ainscough struck for the second time on Monday of this week.

The Unite union members have rejected the company's two-year pay offer of 2.5 percent and 2.75 percent.

The dispute is about pay, but many workers are angry over their working hours too.

One worker in London told Socialist Worker, "An operator could be out for 20 hours when you consider having to drive to a site, set up, work for eight hours and then drive back.

"That's why there are lots of divorces, not having a proper family life. The management take us for granted."

According to striker Mark, "We work really unsociable hours. I could find out tonight that I'm off to Scotland tomorrow and I can end up doing 16-hour days.

"You can't make any plans or tell your wife what time you're going to be home. It's a nightmare sometimes.

Dangerous

"We are in charge of multi-million pound machines and it's a dangerous job, but our hourly rate doesn't reflect that at all. We just want what we're entitled to."

Richard added, "Sometimes the job can be a ticking time bomb because of how dangerous it is. There's a serious lack of appreciation.



STRIKERS PICKETING in Glasgow on Monday of this week

PICTURE: DAVE SHERRY

"People have worked hard and want to be rewarded.

"We earn them their money but we don't see any of it.

"We're not greedy, we have a massive responsibility here and feel as though we deserve better."

Unite national officer for construction Bernard McAulay said, "We fear that the drive to lower pay won't stop with this offer.

"We are extremely concerned that

Ainscough is drawing up plans to rip up the industry-wide agreement by introducing zero hours contracts for a pool of workers."

The company has denied planning to introduce zero hour contracts.

Workers plan a series of escalating strikes across the firm's 30 depots until 23 March.

A programme of overtime bans will run until 20 March.

Talks between the company

and the union were set to begin as Socialist Worker went to press.

Sean who has worked in the industry for over two decades said, "It's got better over the years but it's still horrible not knowing where you're going the next day.

"Our demands are not unreasonable. What we're asking for is nothing.

"Safety before profit is their motto, but that doesn't seem to be the case."

●Thanks to everyone who sent reports

STEEL WORKERS

More tariffs won't save steel jobs

STEEL GIANTS Tata and ArcelorMittal posted losses last week for the last three months as low steel prices continue to eat into profits.

Tata cut 3,000 jobs at plants in Britain last year and plans more this year.

Bosses and unions have both blamed "dumping"—selling below cost—by subsidised Chinese producers. Now politicians are joining them.

European Commissioner for Trade Cecilia Malmstrom announced three new dumping investigations on Chinese steel last week. The European Union (EU) also introduced a new levy—an import tax—on rebar steel used in construction.

This is far less than bosses demanded—the UK Steel lobby group even called it "a slap in the face".

Unions also slammed the government for using foreign steel in major projects including new navy warships and the Hinkley Point nuclear plant.

But lining up with bosses won't save jobs.

Before the industry's current crisis Britain exported more steel than it imported. A drop in demand from China and other big developing countries has left an "overcapacity" in steel everywhere.

Fighting over import tariffs means accepting that some plants and jobs will go and trying to make sure the cuts are imposed elsewhere.

Steel production could be driven by public need, not market chaos, if it was nationalised. But that would take a fight against bosses that unions so far have been unwilling to lead.

LONDON UNDERGROUND

Stations dispute off—but workers didn't get a say

by RAYMIE KIERNAN

A 48-HOUR strike by London Tube station staff planned for last Saturday was called off after the RMT union accepted new proposals from bosses.

The RMT has said the dispute "is now resolved" and all action is "cancelled".

There is rightly some disquiet that the proposals were not first put to members before the union accepted them.

The walkout was set to be part of a week of action against cuts imposed on stations by bosses under the guise of their "Fit for the Future" reorganisation.

In accepting the deal the union said it "reaffirmed our concerns about the Fit for the Future concept but also notes that the new model will commence".

It's true that bosses would have had it all their own way had station staff not fought back.

Yet bosses have attacked terms and conditions, and closed ticket offices.

Hundreds of jobs have gone.

Solid walkouts in 2014 by RMT and TSSA union members gave the campaign momentum.

Had union leaders not thrown that momentum away for talks, the picture today could look very different.

MAINTENANCE WORKERS

Action over safety could have big impact

TUBE maintenance staff working on London Underground were set to strike for 24 hours from 6.30am on Friday of this week in the first of a series of seven strikes.

The action will have a big impact on planned maintenance work.

The RMT union members work for Tube Lines and London Underground.

They are in dispute over safety after bosses imposed new track access arrangements called Section 15 Possessions.

The changes mean a switch from a computerised system for track access to one where individual staff members work "from memory with little to no training" according to the union.

The RMT said, "From a situation where everyone knew how to access the track, we now have anarchy and



'It's everyone's fight'

uncertainty. Into this mix we have engineering train movements that we believe will lead to someone being killed and this union will not sit back and wait for a disaster to happen."

Three further strikes are set for 6, 25 and 27 March with

one strike a month in April, May and June.

Some 500 track patrol staff in the RMT are also set to strike alongside maintenance crew in a dispute over the use of private contractors to casualise and undermine their jobs

ENVIRONMENT

Protest for Heathrow 13

CONSTRUCTION bosses who stand to make billions out of the project have urged the government to build a new runway at Heathrow airport.

They wrote a letter to Tory chancellor George Osborne this week.

A third runway would vastly increase Britain's greenhouse emissions and add to climate change.

It would make air and noise pollution worse.

Thirteen activists who held a peaceful direct action in the airport against a third runway are due to be sentenced on 24 February.

A solidarity protest is planned outside the court on the day.

●Assemble 9am, Willesden Magistrates Court, 448 High Road, London NW10 2DZ



MORE THAN 2,000 junior doctors and supporters marched in London last Saturday

PICTURES: GUY SMALLMAN

DOCTORS FIGHT TORIES FOR NHS

by TOMÁŠ TENGELY-EVANS

JUNIOR DOCTORS in the British Medical Association (BMA) were set to strike on Wednesday of this week against health secretary Jeremy Hunt's plans for dangerous new contracts.

It comes as Tory cuts and privatisation are plunging the NHS deeper into crisis.

A report for the National Audit Office last week said the NHS already has a shortfall of 50,000 clinical staff. It warned that hospitals trying to save cash risked "understating their staff needs".

More than 2,000 junior doctors marched in London last Saturday and 500 protested in Bristol the following day.

Junior doctor Craig said, "It's almost like Jeremy Hunt has got a death wish for the NHS. There isn't a single junior doctor who supports Hunt."

The new contracts would slash unsocial hours payments and remove financial penalties on hospital bosses who make junior doctors work a dangerous number of

hours. Louise, a GP trainee from London, said, "There would be no restrictions on unsafe hours."

"But tired doctors make mistakes and that's no good for our patients."

Hunt claims the new contract is necessary to bring in "seven day working" and improve patient care.

Nights

But junior doctors already work long hours, including nights and weekends.

Junior doctor Zena explained, "If you're not on call then you'll be working from 9am until 5pm, but you always get there early and leave late."

"If you are on call you're working around the clock for 56 hours from Saturday morning until Monday evening."

Hunt wants to smash health workers' pay, terms and conditions to soften the NHS up for privatisation.

Mohammed, a junior doctor from London, added, "This contract is about dismantling the National Health Service."

"The workforce is already



There is real anger among NHS workers

**It's almost like
Jeremy Hunt
has got a death
wish for the
NHS**

Junior doctor Craig

More online

Go to socialistworker.co.uk for coverage of the strike. Send reports and pictures to reports@socialistworker.co.uk



stretched to the limit and to go any further would put patients' lives at risk."

Health students fighting to save their bursaries were also planning a one-hour solidarity walkout as part of a week of action that began on Monday of this week.

Devastating

Danielle, a leading student nurse, said, "I'm joining the junior doctors because the NHS is facing devastating cuts."

"If we don't unite now we could lose the NHS."

The Tories are ramping up their attacks on the NHS. Department of Health bosses announced that it could impose the new contract as early as this week. But a united fight can stop them.

Andy, a junior doctor from London, said, "The strike is the key thing now. We're worried that they might announce imposition, but we've got to keep protesting and striking."

Roshana Median, one of the London demonstration organisers, told the rally, "We will not let them impose this contract."

Fixing cuts with cuts?

LABOUR PEER Lord Carter calls for another £5 billion in NHS cuts in a new report.

He claimed these could come through "efficiency savings". In reality they would have a devastating effect on staff and services.

The report identifies problems but many are a result of cuts. For example, "bed blocking" patients often cannot be discharged because social care has been decimated.

Carter points to high agency staff bills and the fact that sick leave differs across trusts. But it's poverty pay and rocketing workloads that are making health workers sick.

The Carter review is a recipe for plunging the NHS further into crisis.